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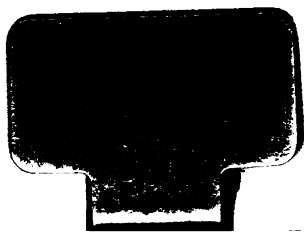
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THE
INDIA CIVIL SERVICE

AS A
CAREER FOR SCOTSMEN

BY
J. WILSON, M.A. EDINBURGH
(INDIA CIVIL SERVICE)

EDINBURGH
DAVID DOUGLAS
1885

Price One Shilling.

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THE
INDIA CIVIL SERVICE

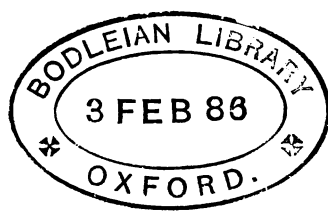
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P R E F A C E.

My object in publishing these papers is to spread more widely throughout Scotland a knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of a career in the Service to which I have the honour to belong, and of the way in which a clever youth can best obtain an appointment in that Service. My hope is that I may thus induce more young Scotsmen to compete, and so help to secure more of these life-prizes for Scotland, and to obtain a still better class of men for India, as, in that case, I shall have done some good both to my native and my adopted country. In explanation of my point of view, I may be permitted to say that I am a Scotsman born and bred, the son of a country minister, educated at Perth Academy and Edinburgh University, and I naturally wish to help others similarly situated to attain the position which I value so highly. I gained the first place in the Open Competition of 1873, and have served for more than eight years in "the Model Province," and the information which I here communicate is the outcome of my own experience.

Some of these papers have already appeared in the *Scotsman*, and are reprinted with permission. Should any person interested in the question desire further information on the subject, I shall be glad to answer any inquiries, so far as my time will allow.

J. WILSON.

OCHILVIEW, CRIEFF, 17th July 1885.

THE INDIA CIVIL SERVICE AS A CAREER FOR SCOTSMEN.

I.—SCOTTISH SUCCESSES.

THERE is some reason to believe that the advantages of an appointment in the India Civil Service, and the means of obtaining such an appointment, are not so well known in Scotland as they ought to be; otherwise the enterprise and ability of young Scotsmen would secure a larger share than they do of these posts, which are undoubtedly, all things considered, the greatest prizes offered for general competition among the youth of the country. It is true that the number of men of Scottish descent in the service is large in proportion to the population of Scotland, but the prominent positions and marked nationality of many of them perhaps give the impression that their number is larger than it really is; and many who have Scottish names and some of the characteristics of Scotsmen are not themselves natives of Scotland, but descendants of men who emigrated to England or elsewhere a generation or two ago. In order to judge properly of the share of these appointments secured by Scotland, it is necessary to inquire how many are obtained by men who have been educated at our Scottish schools and Universities; for a man of Scottish descent, born or educated out of Scotland, can hardly be claimed as a Scotsman pure and simple.

According to the statistics published by the Civil Service Commissioners, who have the control of the examinations for the India Civil Service, during the last ten years 333 appointments have been thrown open to competition, and of these 39 have been won by men who had been at least partly educated at schools situated in Scotland. Thus Scottish schools can, in some sense, claim to have secured about one in nine of these valuable prizes. But the population of Scotland is almost one-ninth of that of the United Kingdom, and as nearly all the remaining appointments have been gained by candidates educated at English and Irish schools, it may be said that Scotland has secured just about the proportion of appointments to which her population would entitle her. No true Scot can be satisfied with this state of matters. When there are such good things going, Scotsmen should manage to secure more than their share in an open competition with Englishmen and Irishmen—at all events they should try.

There has been a disposition of late to complain that the reduction of the maximum age for candidates at the open competition from twenty-one to nineteen, which was made in 1878, has placed Scotsmen at a disadvantage as compared with men educated at English schools. This either means that a Scottish lad does not develop so rapidly as an English lad, or that the English schools are superior to the Scottish in the education they give to lads of eighteen and nineteen; and I am not prepared to admit either alternative. At all events, if the latter be the case, it is no reason for raising the age for the competition, which should be regulated solely with the view of securing the best men for India; it is rather a reason for improving the Scottish schools up to the English standard. No doubt there is considerable room for improvement in secondary education in Scotland; but even as things now are, I do not see why a Scotsman of eighteen or nineteen should be afraid to compete on equal terms with an Englishman or Irishman of the same age for anything so well worth a struggle. That the reduction of the age has not really told against Scotland is shown by the statistics of the last five years, during which lads under nineteen educated at Scottish schools have secured 22 out of 178 appointments, or about one-eighth of the total number; while during the four years ending 1877, which was the last year in which all the vacancies were open to men under twenty-one, they secured only 15 out of 140 appointments, or less than one-ninth of the whole. The change does not appear to have told even against the Scottish Universities, as is generally supposed, for during the four years previous to the reduction of the age men educated at the Scottish Universities gained only 13 out of 140 appointments, or one-eleventh of the whole, and during the four years following the reduction they gained 17 out of 140, or one-eighth of the whole. Both the schools and the Universities of Scotland, therefore, appear to have been benefited rather than injured by the reduction of the maximum age from twenty-one to nineteen. There is some reason to hope that the age will shortly be raised again to twenty-one, or even twenty-two, which was the maximum age for the competition previous to 1866; not because this will remove an inequality between Scotland and England, but on the more worthy ground that the change will lead to the selection of better men for the work of governing India. At present, however, the maximum age is nineteen, and it will probably continue so for some time; and it will be best to consider only the statistics for years during which this has been the limit—say the last five years, 1880 to 1884 inclusive.

During these five years, as already said, the total number of appointments thrown open to competition has been 178, and of these 22 have been secured by men partly educated at schools in Scotland, 4 by men educated at Indian and Colonial schools, 8 by men educated in Ireland, and no fewer than 144 by men whose school education was acquired in England. It is evident, then, that it is only the English schools whose competition need be considered; and for the present the London "cramming establishments" may be left out of account, for these statistics refer only to those schools

at which the successful candidates were educated before they commenced "special preparation" for the examination. The English schools which scored any considerable number of successes during those five years were :—Bedford, 6 ; Charterhouse, 9 ; Cheltenham, 10 ; Clifton, 9 ; Eton, 3 ; Harrow, 2 ; Dulwich, 6 ; Merchant Taylors', London, 3 ; St. Paul's, 3 ; University College School, 4 ; Rugby, 4 ; Wellington, 3 ; Winchester, 11. Some 60 appointments have been gained in ones and twos by about 45 public schools in different parts of England, and 12 by lads educated entirely at private schools. Seemingly one or two of the great English schools lay themselves out for the Indian Examinations, and so manage to secure a large share of the appointments ; but the fact that so many schools furnish successful candidates seems to show that any very special preparation is not necessary, at all events in the earlier stages of a boy's education ; and unless we are to admit that our secondary education in Scotland is decidedly inferior to that given in a large number of schools in England, there is no reason to think that Scotsmen cannot hold their own in a perfectly open competition, in which each candidate has a wide range of subjects to choose from.

The 22 appointments secured by Scottish schools have been gained as follows :—Aberdeen, 7 ; Arbroath, 2 ; Ayr, 1 ; Blair-lodge, 1 ; Edinburgh, 4 ; Fordyce, 1 ; Glasgow, 3 ; Glenalmond, 1 ; St. Andrews, 1 ; Turiff, 1. The great success of Aberdeen appears to be chiefly due to the special attention which has been devoted to the subject there during recent years. It seems strange that Edinburgh, with its excellent schools, should not have been more successful, and there are many other schools in Scotland that might have been expected to secure at least one or two of these appointments during the five years. The number of unsuccessful candidates appears to show that one reason why Scotland does not secure more places is that she sends up few competitors. During these five years there were 803 candidates examined for the 178 vacancies, so that altogether between a fourth and a fifth of the candidates were successful (it is to be remembered, however, that many of the candidates compete more than once, and are thus reckoned twice over in the 803) ; 60 of the candidates examined had been educated at Scottish schools, and of these 22, or more than a third, were successful ; so that while Scotland gained one appointment out of eight, she supplied only a thirteenth of the competitors, and the standard of the Scottish candidates is evidently higher than that of the other competitors. Take, for instance, the following comparison : Aberdeen sent up 10 candidates, and of these 7 gained appointments ; while only ten out of 34 sent up by Cheltenham, and only 2 out of 24 sent up by Harrow, were successful. It seems probable from these figures that the Scottish schools might send up more candidates with some hope of getting more of them in, for it is always difficult to judge of the chances of a candidate, and the examination is well worth a trial so long as there is the least probability of success.

With the age so low as nineteen, comparatively few of the candidates have any University training before the open competi-

tion. Yet during the four years 1880 to 1883 no fewer than 30 of the 140 successful candidates were men who had attended some University. Of these, 5 had been at Oxford or Cambridge, 5 in London, 3 at Irish Universities, and no fewer than 17 at Scottish Universities, viz.: Aberdeen, 9; Edinburgh, 4; Glasgow, 3; and St. Andrews, 1. It thus appears that even with this low maximum age the Scottish Universities can do something towards training men for the open competition. What can be done by special attention to the subject is shown by the case of Aberdeen University, which has secured 9 appointments in the last five years, seven of these being gained by men who had been previously educated at schools in the town of Aberdeen. And long-headed as the Aberdonians proverbially are, there is no reason why we in the South of Scotland should despair of doing as well as they, provided we make the same special effort. As regards our fellow-competitors of other nationalities, the sort of result at which we should aim is exemplified by the competition of 1883, at which 10 out of the 42 appointments were gained by men who had been educated at schools in Scotland, and 11 of the successful competitors owed some part of their education to one or other of the Scottish Universities.

II.—PAY, PENSION, AND FURLOUGH.

In considering the advantages and disadvantages of an Indian career it will be best to discuss first its pecuniary aspect; not that this is by any means the most important, but because it is easier to estimate the material advantages which are likely to result from an appointment to the Civil Service of India than it is to give a clear and comprehensive idea of the higher opportunities which such a career opens up to a youth ambitious to make his mark on his generation by increasing the happiness and alleviating the misery of his fellow-men. To begin with, one great advantage of the present system of appointment by open competition is, that it does not require any unusual expenditure by way of preparation for the examination, although, of course, all well-directed special preparation (some forms of which are very expensive) increases the chance of success in the competition. It has been shown over and over again that a clever lad of eighteen or nineteen, who has made the most of his opportunities in the ordinary course of study, preliminary to entering upon any of the learned professions, may go up to the annual competition without any very special preparation, and succeed in obtaining one of the 30 or 40 appointments annually thrown open. In such a case the only expenditure necessary is the examination fee of £5, and the cost of the journey to and from London, and of living there during the fortnight of the examination. Moreover, owing to the present low maximum age of nineteen, an unsuccessful candidate can at once turn his attention to some other career without having lost much time in preparation for the Indian competition; for his studies, if properly

directed, will have been such as are useful for almost any learned profession. The candidate, if successful, is required to pass two years in this country at some University, in special preparation for his work in India, but he becomes at once entitled to an allowance at the rate of £150 a year, which should enable him, if necessary, to support himself without any further assistance from home. Probably the great majority of successful candidates do receive such further assistance; but there have been many cases, especially perhaps among Scotsmen, in which the selected candidate has been able to support himself after passing the open competition; and it should be a great inducement to any impecunious father to send a clever son to compete for one of these appointments, that success in the competition will mean that his son, at the early age of nineteen, will have got the very best start in life, and will not only at once cease to be a burden on the family resources, but will soon be in a position to help the younger members of the family.

After the two years' special study at some University, the selected candidate is required to pass a final examination, which he will certainly be able to pass unless he has grossly wasted his time, and then becomes a member of the Civil Service of India, with all its privileges. He leaves home for India, say, at the age of twenty-one, and immediately on joining his post there he receives a salary of 400 rupees a month, or, say, £400 a year. Salaries in India are paid monthly in rupees. The rupee is no longer, alas! worth 2s.; it is now hardly worth 1s. 7d., but may, for convenience' sake, be taken at 1s. 8d., so that 100 rupees a month may be called £100 a year. Within two years his salary will be raised to £500, and, according to present prospects, he will probably after five years be in receipt of £700, and at the age of thirty will have a salary of £800 or £900 a year. Towards the end of the twenty-five years' service necessary for pension, he will probably be drawing about £2000 a year; and if he has shown himself an efficient officer, and chooses to stay on for some years longer, he may hope pretty confidently to be drawing at the age of fifty a salary of £2500 or £3000 a year as a Commissioner or Judge. There are a considerable number of more highly-paid appointments open to civilians, such as the Lieutenant-Governorships with £8000 a year, one of which is now held by a native of Edinburgh, who passed into the service in one of the first open competitions. Of course it is only the very best men who obtain such prize appointments; still, every young civilian may aim at such high posts with somewhat more hope than the ordinary young advocate has of becoming Lord Justice General of Scotland. Except, perhaps, for a few particular appointments, interest is of almost no avail in India, and it is very seldom that one hears of anything like favouritism or jobbery in the distribution of posts. There is no service in which merit is so sure to be rewarded, and a Scottish peasant's son, without a single relation in India, may feel certain of attaining high office if he shows himself worthy of it. Unfortunately for India, it cannot be said with equal assurance that demerit is certain to meet with its deserts, for too often a lazy or incompetent officer, so long as he performs his duties without gross negligence, rises by mere force of

seniority to a position of great authority and emolument ; but there are signs of improvement in this respect, and of a tendency to insist on a higher standard of work than has hitherto been required as a matter of necessity.

After twenty-five years' service, or say about the age of forty-six or forty-seven, the civilian can retire any day he likes with a pension of £1000 sterling a year. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that the whole of this liberal pension is given by the State in addition to the high salaries paid ; for the Secretary of State, who guarantees this pension, deducts four per cent. from the monthly salary of every civilian towards its cost, and, according to recent calculations, these deductions would themselves give each civilian a pension of something like £600 a year, so that the share of the pension really paid by the State is only about £400. However, the pension actually drawn is £1000, and as the deduction is made from the civilian's salary before it reaches him, he hardly feels it a burden. Another deduction of about three per cent. is similarly made for the Widows' Fund, now guaranteed by the Secretary of State, which gives a pension of £300 a year to the widow of any civilian of some years' standing, besides liberal allowances to his children ; the allowances being smaller, though still considerable, for the widow and children of a civilian of only a few years' service. Thus not only is the civilian himself provided for all his days, but ample provision is made for his widow and children—out of his own pocket, indeed, but in such a way that he hardly notices the necessary payments. He therefore has the great advantage of being free from anxiety regarding pecuniary provision for the future of himself and his family, even if he cannot save much out of his monthly pay over and above these compulsory savings which are made for him. It is not so easy to save out of a high income in India as in Scotland, and a man who would be content to live on £500 a year in this country will find £1000 go as quickly in India ; for many things which would be luxuries here are practically necessities in that hot climate, and a civilian in receipt of high pay finds it due to his position as a conspicuous officer of Government to maintain a considerable style of living, and to exercise expensive hospitality. Still, unless a civilian is very extravagant, or is blessed with a prematurely large family, he generally manages in the course of his service to lay by a considerable sum, the interest of which will add to his liberal pension, and enable him to live comfortably at home after his life's work in India is over. At all events, it will be his own fault if he ever has any great anxiety about money matters, and the immense advantage of this feeling of security and freedom from worry will be appreciated by many a professional and business man in this country, whether his affairs be generally prosperous or otherwise.

The Indian civilian is very well off in the matter of leave. If the necessities of the administration allow, he is entitled to a month's leave on full pay every year, and it is becoming more and more common to save up this "privilege leave" for three years, and use the three months together for a run home, which can be done for about £200, allowing for a six weeks' stay in this country. He

is also entitled to two years' furlough after the first eight years' service, and thereafter to a year's furlough out of every five years; only, if he avails himself to the full of his furlough, he must, before becoming entitled to pension, extend his service so as to put in twenty-one years' active service in India. His furlough allowance is at least £500 sterling, and towards the end of his service £1000 a year. Should he fall ill, he can obtain further leave on lower allowances; and should he turn out "a bad bargain" or overwork himself, and have to be permanently invalided home, he gets a fair pension proportioned to his length of service; unless he have served only a very few years, in which case he is cut off with a gratuity. In short, in regard to pay, pension, and leave, there is no position at home open to the ordinary youth, who has to make his own way in the world, which can be compared with the Indian civilian's. He cannot, indeed, make a large fortune, for he is strictly forbidden to engage in trade, but he is sure of a competency for himself and his family, and the lad who at eighteen or nineteen gains a place in the open competition for appointments in the India Civil Service is, so far as money goes, a made man for life.

III.—DRAWBACKS.

Any one who thinks of an Indian career for himself or for his son should weigh carefully the disadvantages of such a career, which are considerable, though not sufficient, in most men's eyes, to counterbalance the great and manifest advantages. One does sometimes meet civilians in India who regret having left the old country, though such men are few, and except in the case of those whose health has given way, it is generally found on further inquiry that their regret is not very deep seated or well founded, and is rather a feeling of disappointment that everything is not exactly as they had hoped. Sometimes, though rarely, a man may be heard to say that he would probably have "done better" if he had remained at home; to which it may be replied that there was at least the chance that he might have done worse. More frequently a man will say that, if he had a sure income of £300 a year, he would go home to-morrow, but this is begging the question; and, on the other hand, there are numerous instances in which men, after obtaining an independent income, find it difficult to tear themselves away from their life and work in India. However, it may save some disappointment and discontent if a lad clearly realises before going out to India what the drawbacks to an Indian life are. And first, with regard to money. A few years ago there was a general "block of promotion" (indeed, according to some, promotion is in a chronic state of block), and as many civilians found themselves in receipt of smaller salaries than they had been led to expect, they became discontented, as men will when they think themselves unjustly treated. Civilians are but human, and important as their duties were, they could not perform them with the same zest and spirit while they were under the influence of this discontent. Government recognised this, and, admitting that there was some foundation for the

feeling that prevailed, granted special allowances, with the view of encouraging promotion, and removing the cause of discontent. It is obvious, however, that such measures cannot be often undertaken by any Government; and the men who enter the service now must not expect such rapid promotion as was obtained by many of their predecessors, especially in the years following the Mutiny. They will find that, if they compare their income, not with what men of the same standing got twenty years ago, but with what their contemporaries at home are now enjoying, they are not very badly off. It must be remembered also that the rupee is no longer worth 2s., but only about 1s. 7d., and that its value is more likely to fall further than to rise, so that a salary of 1000 rupees a month, which used to be equivalent to £1200 a-year, is now equal to less than £1000 a year; and this makes a vast difference when home expenses are heavy, as they always are to a man with a family. It is at first disheartening to a young civilian, full of enthusiasm for the great work that lies before him, to find the talk of his seniors so full of questions of promotion and rupees. Every man in India has his personal grievance, on which he waxes eloquent on the slightest provocation; but it is seldom that it so possesses his soul as to interfere with his efficiency as an officer, and generally it is only an excuse for the exercise of his privilege as a Briton of grumbling; indeed, often it will be found that the greatest grumblers are the best workers.

There is one thing in this connection which the young civilian should realise before he goes out to India, for experience shows that there is nothing more likely to cause serious discontent—viz., the promotion of natives to high office. It is no new thing to appoint natives to important and lucrative posts, but the practice is becoming more common, and is sure to grow as education spreads and more natives of India show themselves fitted for such posts; and the civilian who goes out now must be prepared not only to find a considerable number of natives above him in the service, but to see comparative outsiders promoted over his head to appointments which, until lately, were considered to be the prerogative of civilians selected at the open competition in London. It is not likely that any Government will make many such appointments at a time, but the young civilian must be prepared to see them made now and then, and willing to share the good things of the service to a certain extent with his native fellows, without feeling that "the bread is being taken out of his mouth." There is no denying that "the service is not what it was," in the sense that promotion is not so rapid and the emoluments not quite so high as they were some years ago; but if the young civilian will be content to take things as they are, and to estimate his prospects at their present value, without longing after the golden past, he will find he has little cause to be discontented with his position.

The chief drawback is of course the climate, which differs very much in different parts of India, in some places being exceedingly moist, in others exceedingly dry, in the north-west characterised by extremes of heat and cold, and in the south by a moderately high temperature much the same all the year round. The cold,

though in some parts often severe enough to cause discomfort, is nowhere to be feared ; indeed, the winter season of the north-west of India may be described as five or six months of unbroken perfect weather. But the hot season is everywhere very trying to a European constitution, which is apt to get worn out by the constant heat, and the physical exhaustion which ensues is very irksome to endure, and sometimes tells on the mental powers. If one has interesting work and feels able to do it, life is endurable and even pleasant, all through the heat ; but the civilian must take into account that his constitution is likely to suffer more in India than at home, and that the chances of disease and death are higher, as the insurance companies show by charging considerably higher premiums on Indian life policies. At times, as for instance when his district is suffering from famine or cholera, the civilian may have to expose himself to the heat and moisture, and run the risk of sunstroke and fever or deadly disease, and this he must be prepared to do without shrinking when occasion arises. As we are enumerating all the horrors, it may be as well to mention the risk of assassination, for even in recent years a few officers have been struck down at their posts by fanatics ; but of course such cases are very rare, and practically, except in a very few districts, one does not think it necessary even to take any precaution against assassination, and in most parts of India a civilian's person is safer against violence than it would be in the streets of London.

Work in India is never light, if it be properly done, and at times is very hard ; and no one should go out in the Civil Service who is not prepared to spend at times three or four hours a day in the saddle and six at the desk, or perhaps to sit in a Court or office for eight hours a day doing hard brain-work, with the thermometer over 90 degs. in the room, and, it may be, with fever coursing through his veins. One of the chief trials of Indian life is the loneliness which must sometimes be endured, when the civilian is out in camp for weeks together without seeing a white face or hearing an English word spoken. Add to this the ever-present feeling of great responsibility, which weighs heavily on some men, and what wonder if, as is sometimes the case, the civilian's mind gives way under the strain. In not a few instances of late years civilians have become temporarily or permanently insane, and in other cases in which the mind has not entirely given way, it has been more or less affected by the hot climate, the lonely life, and the strain of hard work. In the frontier province, where perhaps the pace has been greater than elsewhere, this affection of the mind has become so common as to receive the name of "Panjab head," the first stage of which is said to be that the man affected becomes unable to take an interest in anything but his work, and the second, that he becomes unable even to perform his official duties. However, it is now so easy to get away on a trip to the hills, or a sea-voyage, or a run home, that the civilian has generally himself to blame if he allows body or mind to reach so low an ebb without giving himself the needed change and rest, and relief from the strain of responsibility.

One of the greatest drawbacks to life in India is the difficulty of

enjoying to the full those domestic ties which make up so much of the pleasure of home-life in this country. Many married men find it necessary to send their wives home or to the hills for part of the year, while they themselves work on alone in the hot plains. But even if it be thought best that the wife should brave the heat at her husband's side at the risk of permanent injury to her health, a time will come when the children must be sent home for their education; for no well-to-do European parents ever think of keeping their children with them in India, with the certainty that they will grow up stunted, mentally and morally, as well as physically. The father must give up his children for a time, and probably his wife too, unless she chooses rather to part with her children than with her husband. It is because of the frequent opportunities they have of coming home and seeing their children that the older civilians cherish so much their privileges of leave and furlough. Would-be reformers, who are fortunate enough to have settled homes of their own in the old country, sometimes grudge the Indian civilian his high pay and pension and liberal allowance of leave; but if they will place against these the hot climate, the hard work, the lonely life, the risks of disease of body and mind, and the want of complete home-ties, they will find that the civilian is not so much overpaid after all.

So great are the drawbacks to a civilian's life in India, that no one should choose it simply because it is likely to give him a larger and more secure income than he would get at home. Unless he can take a thorough interest in his work in India, he is likely to find that high pay and good position there do not make up for the loss of the many advantages of life at home, which are not duly appreciated until one has felt the want of them. If, however, he is ambitious of great power to do good in his generation, he will find his work as a civilian so absorbing as to make him forget many of these drawbacks, and think the others of comparatively little importance. No one who has an assured position or good prospects at home would be wise to give those up for life in India, for which he may or may not be suited. And, above all, no one who is not thoroughly healthy, and strong both in mind and body, should think of entering the Indian Civil Service. There is a somewhat strict medical examination of candidates, both at the open competition, and again before they go out to India; but, especially perhaps of recent years, some men have been allowed to enter the service who were unfit to stand the climate or the work, and have died or been invalided home before their career was fairly begun. This is not fair either to India or to the men themselves. Any man who is not quite free from constitutional weakness, or who has reason to fear that his body or mind could not stand the climate and the strain of anxious work, should be content with a career at home, where he can do more good than by going out to try in India work beyond his strength.

IV.—POWERS AND DUTIES.

The men that India wants for her Civil Service are well-educated youths of good physical and moral stamina, full of energy and enthusiasm and noble ambition. She offers to such men high pay and valuable privileges, and unrivalled opportunities of directly influencing for good great numbers of their fellow-men, and expects from them in return devotion to their great work, and an unshrinking sacrifice of self when duty demands. No lad who has good stuff in him—and what young Scotsman has not?—need fear that he will not have every opportunity of exercising all his powers. He will, almost as soon as he sets foot in India, find himself in a position of great responsibility, and there is nothing like responsibility for developing character and bringing out whatever of good there is in a man. It is astonishing how soon the mere student, who has hitherto had few duties more important than that of amassing knowledge, and possessed little influence beyond his own home-circle, develops into the shrewd, self-reliant officer, to whom thousands of natives confidently look for wise help and guidance.

The whole administration of the vast Indian Empire, with its two hundred and fifty millions of inhabitants, is directed and controlled by members of the India Civil Service, who number altogether between 900 and 1000, aided by some 200 military officers "in civil employ." There are, of course, many other European officers, chiefly employed in special departments, such as public works, police, forests, etc., but they are, generally speaking, subordinate to civilians in all but departmental details. The details of the general administration also are, for the most part, carried out by natives, many of whom occupy positions of great power and authority; but, with very few exceptions, these native officials are directly under the control of civilians, and it may fairly be said that the whole Government of the country is conducted by the civilians. At first, of course, the young civilian occupies a comparatively subordinate position, inferior even to that of many of his native fellow-officers, but he rises rapidly to positions of greater authority, and, as his privileges as a member of the Civil Service ensure that he will soon attain a place beyond their reach, he finds that from the first he has greater power and influence than his present position alone would give him. An empty-headed youth might be in some danger of becoming unduly puffed-up by the Oriental flattery which is constantly dinned into his ears, all the more dangerous because it is partly sincere; but the feeling it excites in the ordinary young Scotsman or Englishman generally has more of disgust in it than pleasure; and if he feels inclined at first to cherish a sense of his own importance, that is soon subdued by the sobering influence of work and the sense of grave responsibility which power brings with it.

Before he has been a week in the country, or has had time to master colloquially the language he has been studying from books at home, the young civilian of twenty-one will find himself invested

with magisterial powers similar to those of a sheriff-substitute in Scotland, and required to try petty criminal cases, and sentence men to fine and imprisonment. He may also have to try petty suits as a civil judge. By degrees, as he becomes more familiar with the language and the customs of the country, other duties of a multifarious nature will be intrusted to him. In the course of the first few years he may hold charge of a treasury, with work resembling somewhat that of the head-office of a bank; he may have supreme control of a jail containing 200 or 300 prisoners, with powers and duties similar to those of a governor of a prison in this country; he may have to look after the construction and maintenance of the roads, bridges, and public buildings of a district as large as a county—to help in the development of education as if he were a member of fifty school boards—to superintend the excise arrangements and aid in the collection of the land revenue; and all the while he has, with ever-increasing powers, to assist as a magistrate in the repression of crime, and to decide as a judge disputes between banker and peasant, tenant and proprietor. One of the chief charms of administrative work in India is its variety. Lighter duties are not wanting to the young assistant magistrate. He may have to look after the public garden, to superintend the police arrangements of a large fair or religious festival, to inquire into and report on some branch of trade or manufacture, crops, improvements in agriculture, antiquities, and what not. If he has any special taste, he is sure to have plenty of opportunity for indulging it. There is never any dearth of interesting and important work, for in such vast machinery there is always some part which requires oiling. The danger to many men is that they should try to do too much and overwork themselves, or get into too narrow a groove and so impair their ultimate usefulness; for every civilian is sure to attain a position in which he will have great questions to decide, and he must be able to take a wide and comprehensive view of men and things.

After some years of such general training, the young civilian may be called upon to specialise himself, and will probably by that time have found out for what line of work he is best suited. He may elect a secretariat life and settle down to office-work, where he will have little direct intercourse with the natives, but great influence in the development of general principles, in the framing of laws, and in the decision of great questions which are referred to head-quarters for final orders. He may choose judicial work, which will bring him little outdoor employment, but give him the decision of important criminal and civil suits and the hearing of appeals from subordinate judges. But if he is a man of energy he will choose a life among the people, and continue engaged in administrative work. He may be employed in the settlement of the land revenue, and may be required, with a large subordinate staff, but with comparatively little help or control from above, to measure and map every field in a district as large as Perthshire, to value the rents of 50,000 holdings, and make a complete registry of the title to every one of them, to decide thousands of cases between landlord and tenant, and practically determine their

relations to one another ; in short, he may have the almost undivided responsibility of carrying out a work which affects more vitally the welfare of a much larger population than will be affected by the present Crofter question, which is likely to require all the wisdom of Parliament and the exertions of many of our best men for a satisfactory solution. And all this, and more, he may have to do before he is five-and-thirty. After about eighteen years' service, or say before he is forty years of age, the civilian who chooses administrative work will become the Chief Magistrate of a District, and so hold the position in which centres all that is best and greatest in our government of India. The territory directly under British rule, which contains a population of over two hundred millions, is divided into some 220 districts, each of which has thus on an average a population of nearly a million, or about one-fourth of the population of Scotland. Over each of these districts there is a District Magistrate, who is responsible for all the details of administration in his district, and has supreme control over almost everything that goes on in it, subject of course to general laws and rules, and to the orders of his superiors on general principles and matters of particular importance. He is the representative of Government to this million of people, and has great power over them in all matters in which they are brought in contact with Government. In India such matters are very numerous, for Government is the universal landlord, and the District Magistrate has, in questions connected with the land, all the power of a factor, and generally is allowed more latitude in his dealings with the thousands of crofters who hold under him than the most indulgent landlord can afford to allow his factor in this country. It is on the District Magistrate that the burden of responsibility presses with greatest weight and persistence, for he is responsible for keeping the whole machine of administration in his district in proper working order. He must constantly be on the watch for any sign of disorganisation or distress among his subjects, and take measures to meet troubles of all kinds when they appear imminent. Not only must he be prompt in the suppression of crime, and careful to see that the land revenue is realised from every individual crofter with due punctuality and without undue harshness, but he must be ready to battle with fever or cholera, or any other form of distress among the population. Especially in times of famine are all his energies tried to the utmost, and he has to work with the consciousness that any mistake or negligence on his part may cause the starvation of hundreds of his people. This is the true work of the Indian civilian, and, except for the constant strain of anxious responsibility, the position of the District Magistrate is preferable to the higher posts, the occupants of which have little direct administrative work to do, but are chiefly employed in the general superintendence of the action of the District Magistrates, in the elaboration of general principles of administration, and in the decision of questions of exceptional importance and magnitude. The prize appointment is that of Lieutenant-Governor, which gives its holder power over twenty or thirty millions of human beings as absolute as any man with a sense of responsibility can wish to have.

Where work is so apt to engross all the faculties too completely, distractions and amusements are of unusual importance, and there are in most parts of India plenty of such means of relaxation. Almost everywhere there are excellent opportunities for sport of various kinds—from partridge-shooting to pig-sticking and tiger-hunting. And although the civilian may at times be stationed in an out-of-the-way district, where he will be thrown much on his own resources, the turns of service are sure to bring him at times to large military stations, where there are frequent balls and theatricals and other gaieties, with any amount of lawn-tennis. But the ideal civilian will always feel most in his element when out in camp among his villages, sympathising with the joys and sorrows of his people, and aiding them in all their difficulties, great and small.

The standard of work in India is very high, both as to quantity and quality, and it is a great advantage to the young civilian to find such an incentive to a thorough performance of his duties in addition to his own sense of their importance. Although in the old days, when votes in Parliament were bought and sold, the tone of the Service was at least no better than that of public men at home, it has for many years been excellent, and it is not too much to say that the standard of official morality is now higher in India than it is in this country. There is very little of the party spirit which disgraces home politics. On important questions of policy opinions naturally often differ, and are expressed with earnestness, and at times with considerable heat; but it is seldom that an Indian civilian is open to influences which impel him to support a particular view for any other reason than that he thinks it for the good of the people under his charge. Civilians are allowed to express their individual opinions with the greatest freedom—so long as this is done in a proper spirit, and so long as the orders of their superiors are loyally carried out; so that, although discipline is strict, it is seldom irksome. The youth who is so fortunate as to gain a place in the Civil Service of India will succeed to glorious traditions, will take a prominent share in the grandest work that ever fell to the lot of any nation, and will become a member of the noblest Service the world ever saw.

V.—THE COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION.

It is astonishing how little is known, even at great centres of education, about the examinations for the India Civil Service, and numerous misapprehensions prevail which probably deter from competing many men who would have had a good chance of securing a place. Any father or master who thinks of sending up a clever son or pupil to try for one of these appointments should obtain through his bookseller (for one shilling) a copy of the regulations, examination papers, and table of marks for the last open competition, published officially by the Civil Service Commissioners, which will give him an idea of what sort of examination candi-

dates have to go through. The examination takes place each year in June, and is open on payment of an examination fee of £5 to all born subjects of Her Majesty above the age of seventeen and below the age of nineteen on the 1st January preceding the examination, who are of good moral character, and free from disease or infirmity likely to unfit them for the Civil Service of India. The subjects of examination are English Composition, History, and Literature, Classics, Modern Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Logic, and a few others. None of these subjects is obligatory; each candidate can take up those in which he is strongest, and leave the others alone; and the examination is strictly competitive, the vacancies being given to those candidates who have obtained the highest number of marks in all the subjects put together. There have been, on the average of the last ten years, 33 vacancies a year and 178 candidates for these vacancies; but last year there were 38 vacancies and 185 candidates. The man who stood first on the list last year (who was, by the way, a native of India) gained 2034 marks, and the man who stood thirty-eighth, and so was the last to obtain an appointment, gained 1427 marks.

The competition is of course a very severe one, and no one need try for a place on the list who is not of exceptionable ability, and who has not distinguished himself among his contemporaries; indeed, many men who go up every year have really no chance whatever of passing. But there is reason to believe that there are many young Scotsmen who would have a good prospect of success, but who, either from ignorance or from an under-estimate of their own powers, do not make the attempt, and it is such men especially whose attention I wish to call to the subject. I myself passed high in the open competition some years ago, without having had much special preparation after leaving Edinburgh University, and am under the impression that several of my contemporaries at Edinburgh, whom I could compare with myself, would have gained places in the competition if they had tried, and would have been now in better circumstances than they are. Any one who glances over the examination papers of former competitions, even those of his own pet subject, may well feel some dismay, for he is certain to find many of the questions too stiff for him to handle satisfactorily. But it should be remembered that, as the examination is a competitive one, the papers must be as difficult in each subject as the candidate who is best in that subject can possibly manage, and no one is expected to get full marks even in any one subject. For instance, last year the man who knew most mathematics obtained only 820 marks out of 1000, and only twelve of the whole number of candidates scored half marks in that subject. Nor is it necessary to take up any large number of subjects; for instance, the man who passed first last year would have secured a place even if he had taken up only four, viz., Latin, French, German, and Mathematics. So that if a man feels able to answer a fair proportion of the questions in a few subjects, he may entertain some hope of success.

As the competition is so severe, and the chances of failure so many, it is not wise for any one to stake all his hopes on gaining an appointment in the India Civil Service. He should rather fix upon

some professional career, and study with a view to that career, only taking the Indian examination by the way. If successful, he can thenceforth devote his whole attention to India ; and if unsuccessful, he can go on with his chosen profession. It will generally be found that the same studies which form the best preliminary to any of the learned professions are also the most suitable for the Indian examinations, which are expressly designed to secure those men who have distinguished themselves most in the ordinary course of studies. It is a mistake to suppose, as some have done, that the examinations are so conducted as to favour lads educated under the English public-school system. The examiners are chosen from among the men most eminent for their knowledge of the different subjects, some of them being professors at Scottish Universities, and they so frame their questions and apportion the marks as to discourage mere superficial cramming, and give full value to solid knowledge, under whichever system acquired. The knowledge which "pays" best for the Indian competition is the same which is most useful in other examinations also ; and in order that a man should have the best chance in the Indian examinations, it is not necessary that he should withdraw himself from the ordinary course of studies at school or college, and devote himself to any special studies. It is true that many of the successful candidates are men who have been under special instruction at Mr. Wren's famous "cramming establishment" in London, but the proportion of his candidates who pass is not very much higher than that of men sent up direct from Scottish schools and Universities, and what superiority his pupils show is not due to their having studied unusual subjects, or to any peculiar system which he adopts, but to the superior excellence of the instruction he gives. I was myself at Mr. Wren's for a few months, and although I should probably have gained a place had I continued my studies at Edinburgh, no doubt I should not have stood so high had I not had the benefit of his training ; not that I got any peculiar "tips" from him, but that I had more individual help given me in my studies than I could have got in the large classes at Edinburgh University, and was taught to devote my attention to the most important parts of my subject, to avoid unnecessary digressions, and to express what I knew clearly and to the point. Of course, any man who has set his heart on going to India and can afford some extra expenditure, will make his chance of success more secure by going to some school where particular attention is given to pupils preparing for the Indian competition ; but my present object is to get good men preparing for other professions to try for these Indian appointments by the way, as it were. The necessary expense is not great—only the examination fee of £5 and the cost of the journey to London and back. If such a man succeeds, let him ponder well whether he is fitted for life in India ; and if he is not strong in body and mind, and ambitious to share in governing his fellow-men, let him give up thoughts of India and return to his chosen profession ; if he fails, he has lost little money and no time, for his studies will be useful for the profession he had intended to pursue. If schoolmasters and professors were to direct the attention of their clever pupils to

the advantages of an Indian career, there would be more competitors than at present, and India would secure even a higher class of men than she now does; and if fathers who find some difficulty in starting their sons in life were to send up clever lads, without any special preparation, on the chance of their passing, they would sometimes find themselves relieved at once of all trouble in providing a future career for their sons. It is always wise, however, as I have said, to have some other career to fall back upon in the event of failure, and one of the strongest reasons for the recent reduction of the maximum age from twenty-one to nineteen was that this change of aim might be made more easy for unsuccessful candidates. I would repeat that any ordinary course of study, provided it is good and thorough, will pay almost equally well for the Indian competition, so that it will generally be wise to arrange one's studies with reference to the alternative career to be adopted in the event of failure.

The reward to be gained, however, is worth a special effort, and deserves harder study than usual, for perhaps a year before the examination. Any one who has set his heart upon an Indian career should be able to read steadily at least eight hours a day, consoling himself with the reflection that he will probably have at times still harder brain-work in India. The following hints may be useful to intending candidates. Do not take up out-of-the-way subjects, such as Sanskrit; they do not pay so well for the examination as the same amount of work on ordinary subjects would, and in the event of failure the work spent on them is labour lost. Do not spread yourself out too much by taking up many subjects; the examinations are expressly designed to discourage a smattering of knowledge, and with that object a deduction is made from the marks obtained in each subject, except English Composition and Mathematics. By reason of this exception, there is some advantage in taking up these two subjects; but, generally speaking, each candidate should devote his attention to those subjects which are most suitable for his alternative career, or for which he has a natural leaning. And in each particular subject his knowledge should be thorough rather than extensive; he will find that an accurate knowledge of the elements will pay him far better than a vague knowledge of the more abstruse parts of his subject. He should not waste his time in reading out-of-the-way books or works which go too fully into detail for his purpose; and, above all, he should never allow himself to forget what he has once learned, but go over his *Cæsar* and his *Euclid* again and again till he has them thoroughly at his finger-ends. If he learns accurately the ordinary work of school or college, he will make the best preparation possible for the Indian examination, as well as for the profession on which he may have to fall back in the event of failure. Any one who is particularly anxious to enter the service will find it worth while to go up for the examination the year before that in which he hopes to succeed, so as to get some idea of the ordeal through which he has to pass and to measure himself against his fellow-competitors.

There is, then, no reason why a clever lad should not go up with some chance of success from his ordinary school or University

course without making any break in it, without any special preparation or extra expense, but only with some extra devotion to his ordinary studies, resulting in greater accuracy and thoroughness, which will be useful to him in after life, whatever his career may be. Many of our secondary schools and some of our parochial schoolmasters are quite competent to give a clever, hard-working lad the necessary help, and money is not necessary to secure a place in the competition. The statistics published by the Civil Service Commissioners show the professions of the fathers of the successful candidates, and from them it appears that of the 333 candidates who have gained appointments in the last ten years, 49 were sons of officers in the Army or Navy, 48 sons of members of the Home or Indian Civil Service, 27 sons of clergymen of the Church of England or Ireland, 9 sons of Presbyterian ministers, 36 sons of barristers, advocates, or solicitors, 23 sons of doctors or surgeons, 35 sons of landowners or gentlemen, 11 sons of architects or artists, 11 sons of schoolmasters or professors, 51 sons of bankers, merchants, and manufacturers, 3 sons of farmers, and 30 sons of clerks or tradesmen. The comparatively large number of appointments gained by sons of officers of the Army, Navy, and Civil Services is no doubt simply owing to the fact that the members of those Services know more of the advantages of these appointments, and direct special efforts towards obtaining them. "The manse" has done well in securing nine appointments, but might perhaps do better, seeing that so many ministers have large families, sometimes comprising clever sons, and stipends hardly large enough to give their sons more than a good education. It is a pity that India does not secure more sons of farmers, for perhaps the most important work to be done there by civilians is connected with the land, with the valuation and collection of the State's rent, with the decision of disputes between proprietor and tenant, and with the development of the agricultural resources of the country; and the early training and sympathies of a farmer's son would help to make him more useful for such work. Indeed, India could hardly have better men for its rulers than members of our Scottish farmer class, with their inherited qualities of sturdy vigour and shrewd practical common-sense; and it is to be hoped that, now that farming is no longer the profitable occupation it was, more of our farmers will send their sons up to compete for appointments in the India Civil Service. Other classes also might well send up more competitors. They need not fear undue favour either towards English schools or influential families. They may have to compete with sons of noblemen educated at the great public schools, but it will be on equal terms, and the best man will gain the prize. And whatever be the shortcomings of the present system of selection, there can be no doubt that the wider the competition the better will be the class of men that India will secure for her Civil Service.

It may be useful to add that, besides the "Civil Service," there are a number of other services in India, appointments to which are annually thrown open to competition in much the same way, such as the Public Works Department, under which are carried out all the great canals and many of the railways and other important

engineering works, which are doing so much to develop the material resources of the country and improve the condition of the people ; the Forest Department, under whose management are the vast forests and jungle tracts which form a source of revenue to the State, and have a beneficial effect on the climate of the surrounding districts ; the Medical Department, the Police Department, and some others. In pay, pension, privileges, and power these are inferior to the Civil Service, but, like it, they give successful candidates a competency for life, interesting work, and great influence for good among our Indian fellow-subjects. A man who is anxious for an Indian appointment, but has not sufficient ability to succeed in the stiffer competition for appointments in the Civil Service, would do well to turn his attention to the annual competition for vacancies in one or other of these departments. The remarks I have made regarding the competitive examination for the Civil Service apply generally to these other examinations also ; but any one desiring particular information regarding these special Services can obtain it on application to the Under-Secretary of State for India at Westminster, who will at once furnish him with a copy of the regulations on the subject.





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